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A SECURITY ASSISTANCE EXAMPLE  
THE U.S. AIR FORCE AND  
THE AFRICAN COASTAL SECURITY PROGRAM

Army - Air Force Center for Low Intensity Conflict  
Langley Air Force Base, Virginia

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**THE US AIR FORCE AND**  
**THE AFRICAN COASTAL SECURITY PROGRAM**

by

Daniel J. Bohlin, Lt Colonel, USAF



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## PREFACE

This paper was written by Lt Colonel Bohlin while he was a Research Associate at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. His previous assignment as an Air Attache in western Sub-Sahara Africa afforded him a unique opportunity to view the regional security assistance actions of such world powers as the United States, Soviet Union, and France. All three nations provide some military assistance to the armed forces in the region. Meanwhile several nations, aware of their security needs, are seeking more US assistance. In 1985, as a response to their initial needs, the US introduced the African Coastal Security (ACS) program. The ACS program has the potential to markedly enhance relations between the US and these countries by enabling military organizations in the region to assist in the protection of an extremely valuable marine resource -- fish.

In the near term, the ACS can achieve enhanced effectiveness with an aerial maritime surveillance capability, while in the future the program could offer regional mobility with the addition of an appropriate airlift platform. Development of non-lethal airpower in the region will not only show US commitment to the economic development in this region but also demonstrate US resolve toward security assistance development elsewhere in Africa where nations choose to share US interests and democratic values.

Since this paper was written, the security assistance figures for the ACS countries for 1989 have become available and are as follows. Planned allocations for International Military Education and Training (IMET) funds were \$70,000 each for Cape Verde, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau, \$125,000 for Mauritania, \$150,000 for Guinea, \$475,000 for Senegal, and \$500,000 for Liberia. For Senegal, security assistance allocations included \$10 million in Economic Support Fund (ESF) and \$500,000 in Military Assistance Program. The security assistance allocations for Liberia included \$11 million in ESF. The African Civic Action funding allocation was \$2 million.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lt Colonel Daniel J. Bohlin completed this study while assigned as the 1987-1988 Air Force Research Associate at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California. Lt Colonel Bohlin is a 1971 graduate of the US Air Force Academy. He studied at the Institut D'Etudes Politiques, Grenoble, France, as a 1978 Olmsted Scholar and obtained an MA in Political Science at Arizona State University in 1981. He has completed Squadron Officer School and the Armed Forces Staff College. A command pilot, Lt Colonel Bohlin began his flying career as an O-2A pilot. He continued flying duties as a KC-135 copilot, aircraft commander, instructor pilot, and flight examiner. His last flying assignment was in West Africa where he performed instructor pilot duties in the C-12 and served as Air Attache.

His interest in the African Coastal Security (ACS) program and a role for the US Air Force in that program stems from Lt Colonel Bohlin's presence in that region of Africa when the Department of Defense introduced the program. Observation flights that he conducted with officials of several African coastal countries added impetus to acceptance of the ACS program in Africa. After finishing his assignment at the Hoover Institution, Lt Colonel Bohlin became an international political-military affairs officer at Headquarters Air Force, Washington, DC. He is the African Branch Chief in the Deputy Directorate for Regional Plans and Policy.

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## **A SECURITY ASSISTANCE EXAMPLE**

### **THE US AIR FORCE AND**

### **THE AFRICAN COASTAL SECURITY PROGRAM**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

To help some of the countries along the northwest coast of Africa protect and manage fishing resources in their two hundred mile-wide Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), the United States has introduced a security assistance project called the African Coastal Security (ACS) program. Begun in 1985, the program has survived extensive budget cuts recently occurring in many United States security assistance programs. Though the ACS budget is minuscule compared to many security assistance programs--it has averaged about \$2 million per year--the return on the investment appears to have great potential for promoting United States interests in this region of Africa and for also assisting the recipients of that aid. Therefore, funding for the ACS program continues.

My introduction to the ACS program occurred while assigned as an air attache to West Africa from 1985 to 1987. During this period, the Defense Attache Office (DAO) in Monrovia, Liberia, flew numerous missions in the DAO's C-12 aircraft in support of American ambassadors representing the United States Government to the coastal countries of this region. Several times the DAO took host country officials, both military and civilian, in the aircraft on overflights of their EEZs. For most of these officials the flights were the only opportunity to view extensive fishing operations taking place in their waters. An almost total lack of air surveillance capability in most of these countries prevented these people from ever observing the widespread, sometimes frenzied, fishing activity occurring just over the horizon from their shorelines.

Many of these officials were displeased both with the apparent poaching of fish as well as their inability to do much about this drain on their economic base. However, having previously recognized this intrusion, their governments had already asked American embassy and Agency for International Development (AID) officials for advice and help in enforcing regulations governing marine activities in these EEZs. The result of those requests was the beginning of the African Coastal Security program.

To date, the US Army, Navy, and Coast Guard have been involved in these coastal countries' respective ACS projects. The Army manages the two Cessna repair cases in Guinea and

Guinea-Bissau. The Navy has been active in conducting surveys of needs and procuring equipment for the different countries' naval units. The Coast Guard has sent Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) to the region to work with these units, primarily on enforcement techniques. Authorities in the participating countries and US Department of Defense (DOD) officials are pleased with the services' efforts.

This paper suggests an expanded role for the US Air Force in supporting the ACS and thereby furthering United States regional security interests. Presently, the only Air Force security assistance effort in the region is the periodic allocation of some International Military Education and Training (IMET) slots to officers in the Senegalese Air Force. An Air Force role in the ACS program would therefore represent a significant change in the Air Force's security assistance activity in this region of Africa. Several reasons exist for addressing a US Air Force role in this region outside the traditional allocation of some IMET slots and within the context of the ACS program.

First, United States support for the ACS program provides the opportunity for the United States to demonstrate support for regional cohesion, cooperation and tranquility. In addition to the regional perspective, which will be important for future United States interests in this region, it also has substantial ramifications for other areas of Africa as well.

Second, as a result of this linkage between United States interests, an evolving regional perspective, and the ACS program, the program becomes a good basis upon which to evaluate an expanded Air Force role in the region. For many years, United States interests, with commensurate amounts of economic and military assistance dollars totaling about \$500 million since 1980, have centered primarily on one country in the region. That country is Liberia. The diminishing availability of foreign aid dollars, some deteriorating conditions in Liberia, and changes occurring in other countries in this region are factors that require the United States take a different look at its security assistance role in this region. The ACS program, which has expanded the United States security assistance role in the region while limiting its involvement with Liberia, considers these factors and provides that different look.

Third, and most importantly, the ACS program is obtaining results. As noted, policymakers in Washington and government officials in the region are satisfied with the program as it is progressing. If the US Air Force is to have an expanded security assistance role in this region, it should be as part of a program that is already engendering success and has the potential to further enhance United States security interests in the region. For the Air Force to have a role in this area of West Africa, linkage with the ACS program is therefore appropriate.

To put the question of the ACS program and the US Air Force in perspective, one must first understand the significance security has for the countries in this region. Security is a concern of every government in the world. For the governments directing state affairs in the countries that the ACS program encompasses, security is very elusive. As a result, security, in its myriad forms--social, political, and economic--is a major concern of these governments. Security is the last word in the ACS title; it is also the first imperative for any government in this region.

### **THE ACS COUNTRIES AND THEIR SECURITY IMPERATIVE**

The region of northwest Africa involved in the African Coastal Security (ACS) program begins with the Cap Blanc peninsula and the port city of Nouadhibou in Mauritania's northwest corner. Follow the coast south through Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and the island country of Cape Verde, and one has the eight "ACS countries" in the geographic region of Africa this paper covers. Cape Verde has so far refused United States invitations to participate in the ACS program. Liberia has also not participated, although they have chosen to channel some of their bilateral Military Assistance Program money toward improvements to their Navy/Coast Guard. This area of Africa is the portion of the continent closest to the Western Hemisphere and also beset with numerous problems.

#### **The Need for Security**

From a socioeconomic standpoint, these countries are some of the most troubled in the world. Six of these eight nations have population life expectancy and literacy figures that are among the lowest in the world. Most of these countries have population annual growth rates greater than two percent. If that growth rate continues, their populations will double in 35 years. Per capita gross national product figures, again some of the lowest in the world; range from about \$170 to \$480 for all these countries.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the countries, like Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea, and The Gambia, are predominantly Muslim. Indigenous religions, however, are still important in many parts of the region. Ethnic diversity pervades throughout the area. Guinea, for example, has three major tribes and about fifteen smaller ones.<sup>2</sup>

The combination of religious and ethnic diversity, population pressures, and stagnating or declining economies poses almost insurmountable problems for the relatively young governments in the region. In November 1987, Sierra Leone's government declared

a state of economic emergency. Since the International Monetary Fund considers Guinea and Senegal as some of "the poorest African countries," it will be loaning their governments money at half a percent annual interest.<sup>3</sup> As part of an economic austerity package, Guinea-Bissau had to devalue its currency by 50 percent in 1987. But these problems are not restricted to those governments achieving independence in the past several decades. For instance, Liberia's inability to deal with bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption, and debt servicing required it to ask the United States Government to bring in an American operational expert team to stop the country's economic regression.

With these developments in the ACS countries, political conditions in some of these nations are volatile. In recent years, the region has had numerous indications of political strife. The Guinean government survived an attempted coup d'état in July 1985. Guinea-Bissau's regime uncovered a coup plot in November 1985. During the same month, Samuel Doe, then president-elect of Liberia, barely survived a coup attempt in Monrovia. In late 1987, the Mauritanian government revealed it had discovered some military officers were planning a coup.

Understandably security, particularly as it relates to their armed forces, is the overriding concern for most governments in the region. Some countries, like Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Mauritania, have heads of government with strong ties to the military. Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau have numerous government officials who participated in their countries' struggles for independence in the mid-1970s. Each ACS country has an army; each country has a group of naval vessels organized into either a navy or coast guard; some countries have either an independent air force or an air unit attached to their armies. These military organizations are very important to the security of their respective governments. Due to this importance, the ACS governments also assure what one noted observer on francophone Africa calls "the growing domestic influence of the military."<sup>4</sup>

These governments have realized they cannot rely exclusively upon their armed forces either to satisfactorily assure their security or to promote security in the region. Therefore, the ACS governments have established defense protocols within the context of two regional organizations that encompass all or part of West Africa. The principal regional organization is the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to which all the ACS countries belong. With the exception of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, all the countries in the ACS region are signatories of the ancillary ECOWAS Defense Protocol. Designed to limit conflict between states and, in certain circumstances, within a country, the protocol appears so far to be more symbolic than practical.<sup>5</sup>

Two ACS countries, Senegal and Mauritania, are among West Africa's francophone nations that have formed another regional organization called the Communauté de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEAO). It also has a defense protocol, called the Accord de Non Aggression et d'Assistance en Matière de Defense (ANAD). The ANAD seeks to "increase stability in the geographic zone" by having members agree "not to use force to resolve their disputes."<sup>6</sup> Admirable in its objective, the protocol did not prevent Mali and Burkina Faso, two ANAD members adjacent to the ACS region, from battling one another over disputed territory in December 1985. ANAD did, however, have a role in maintaining a truce until the two sides resolved the issue.

There are also bilateral or multilateral agreements in place. In late 1986, for example, Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone signed a non-aggression pact. The accord states the signatories will not support sanctuary for political opposition of neighboring states, and if a government discovers activity of this nature on its territory, it will provide details of that activity to the other governments.

#### The Major Powers Security Role

Though one may question their effectiveness, these defense protocols and related agreements add to the ACS governments' sense of security. However, the most important aspect of the security imperative for the ACS countries is the bilateral relation each of them has established with one or more of the world's military powers--the United States, the Soviet Union, or France. The USSR provided the combatants in Guinea-Bissau with equipment and training during their fight for independence from Portugal. France helped Mauritania against the Polisario. The United States has signed a defense agreement with Liberia that protects it from outside aggression.

These security relationships, continue and remain important for both the ACS countries and these three powers which provide the most military assistance to the region. France, for instance, is quite active in several ACS countries. In Senegal, France has both a defense agreement and a military assistance accord with the Senegalese government. France maintains a garrison in Dakar, and French military aircraft regularly transit and stage missions from Dakar's international airport. This airport is the gateway to French military flight operations throughout West Africa. France provides the Senegalese armed forces with military equipment, training, and general military support.

Besides its agreement with Senegal, France also has a military assistance agreement with Mauritania. French efforts with the Mauritanian military focus primarily on providing instruction at a military school and on training and maintaining

a paracommando battalion, located at Atar. Both projects are intended to make the Mauritanian military more of an institution in the country. These projects have been ongoing for a considerable period of time and appear to be obtaining good results.

France's military assistance in the region has also become important in Guinea. France has provided the Guinean army with training and equipment, particularly for the presidential guard. Guinea asked France to help establish a military school and provide some basic aircraft for pilot training and proficiency flying.

Finally, France has dispatched a small military medical team to Guinea-Bissau. Headed by an army colonel, the team will be in Guinea-Bissau for several years. It is establishing medical disability standards for veterans of Guinea-Bissau's fight for independence. In addition, it is determining the medical standards for the government's future conscription laws.

The United States is the other major western power active with security assistance efforts throughout the ACS area. The United States classifies its security assistance programs according to broad policy goals such as "deter and combat aggression," "promote regional stability," or "promote professional military relationships through grant training." The goal under which most countries in this region fall is currently one of the less significant when considered in a global context. That goal is to promote professional military relationships through grant training.

Grant training is in the International Military Education and Training (IMET) category of security assistance programs. For the ACS countries of Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Mauritania, and The Gambia, IMET funds, in addition to what these countries can obtain for their ACS projects, represented the only United States security assistance available to them in 1988. For 1988, planned allocations for IMET funds to these countries ranged from \$50,000 each for Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau to \$100,000 for Mauritania.<sup>7</sup>

A second broad policy goal under which some ACS countries receive United States security assistance allocated to them is "Promote Regional Stability." Guinea and Senegal are in this category. African Civic Action (ACA) is another security assistance program under this policy goal.

The ACA program is very important to the ACS countries because funds for the ACS program are in the ACA program budget line. The Congressional Presentation for Security Assistance Programs, better known as the Congressional Presentation Document (CPD), does not have a budget line for the ACS program because

the United States Government incorporates ACS in the continent-wide ACA program. Some of the goals for the ACA projects which are most pertinent to the ACS program are: (1) "Improve African armed forces capability to plan and implement projects that benefit the civilian population," and (2) "Assist the military in utilizing and protecting natural resources."<sup>8</sup> The ACA funding allocation for 1988 was \$3 million, which was down from an earlier proposed \$6 million.<sup>9</sup> However, the ACS program's portion of the ACA budget will likely stay at its planned \$2 million.<sup>10</sup> For 1989, if allocations hold, the ACS program will thus obtain a larger percentage of the ACA budget than it did in the beginning years of the program.

Senegal receives the most security assistance funding under the "Regional Stability" policy goal. The United States has provided the Senegalese military with training, 5-ton and rebuilt 2-1/2 ton trucks, and other military equipment. The ACS funds will enable construction of a naval forward operating base in the Casamance region of southern Senegal. Security assistance allocations for 1989 included \$10 million in Economic Support Fund (ESF), \$750,000 in the Military Assistance Program (MAP); and \$450,000 for IMET.<sup>11</sup>

In previous years, Guinea received United States security assistance in the form of MAP and IMET funds. Most of the MAP money was used to procure naval equipment, including patrol boats which the Guinean navy uses in the ACS program. The Guinean navy has older, Soviet-supplied patrol boats, but these vessels are inoperative. Proposed 1988 security assistance allocations to Guinea were \$150,000 for IMET.<sup>12</sup>

The most important United States policy goal involving the ACS region is called "Enhance Cooperative Defense and Security." Liberia is the only ACS country whose security assistance programs are under this policy goal. The importance of Liberia to United States interests in the region is mainly because Liberia has the greatest concentration of United States Government assets on the African continent. It is also one of only three African countries that has a formal defense agreement with the United States.<sup>13</sup> Compared to other ACS countries, United States security assistance has provided a great deal of United States military equipment and training to Liberia.

Looking at the last 4 years, security assistance funding to Liberia was actually at its peak in fiscal year 1985. At that time ESF expenditures were \$43 million; MAP was \$12 million; and IMET, which trained 92 Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) personnel that year, totaled \$1.157 million.<sup>14</sup> Since then security assistance funding to Liberia has dropped considerably. The 1988 allocations for the same category of funds were as follows: ESF--\$11 million; IMET--\$500,000; the administration allocated no money for MAP.<sup>15</sup>

United States security assistance programs have taken a variety of different forms in Liberia, particularly since the 1980 coup d'etat that toppled the ruling Americo-Liberian oligarchy. For example, in April 1981, one year after the coup, US Army Green Berets and soldiers of the AFL participated in combined military exercises. A \$40 million housing program, begun in fiscal year 1981, is finally nearing completion. For several years, numerous Liberian military personnel have received training in the United States. That training included pilots in the AFL's Air Reconnaissance Unit (ARU). In 1985, they received instruction in the United States shortly before the ARU received two Cessna 208 Caravan aircraft, one at the end of 1985 and another at the beginning of 1986.

In addition to these programs, the United States has made improvements at Liberia's Roberts International Airport (RIA) where US Air Force aircraft periodically transit en route to other parts of Africa. The improvements have included enlarging the aircraft parking area and the construction of a fuel storage and refueling facility. The United States Government intended to turn over the refueling facility to the Liberian government following its completion. So far, Liberia has declined to take over the operation and maintenance of the facility.

To administer many of the security assistance programs in Liberia, the United States has a Security Assistance Organization (SAO) in Monrovia. In Senegal, two United States military officers, one the Defense Attache and the other a SAO augmentee, along with a civilian, administer the security assistance programs. In 1987, the SAO in Liberia had six United States military personnel, two United States civilian personnel, and two local employees.<sup>16</sup>

For the SAO in Liberia, some portions of its security assistance effort have been less than rewarding. Recent Brooke Amendment sanctions against Liberia have handicapped United States efforts to maintain continuity with present programs. (When a country receiving security assistance from the United States falls more than 12 months behind in its repayment of outstanding balances to the United States Government, that country is ineligible for further assistance until it pays the arrears.) For a portion of fiscal year 1987, Liberia was under the Brooke Amendment. With the ensuing sanctions, Liberia lost a sizable portion of its allocated 1987 IMET funding. In addition, Brooke sanctions hampered United States Agency for International Development's (AID) work with the ESF account, which is a large portion of security assistance in Liberia.<sup>17</sup>

Aggravating these security assistance difficulties was the Liberian government's acquisition of a significant amount of military hardware from Rumania in late 1986. Despite the country's defense agreement with the United States, the ongoing



United States security assistance programs, and a large number of Americans in the country, the Liberian government still had perceptions of being in a very insecure position.<sup>18</sup> Thus, even though it confronted serious debt problems, the Liberian government in late 1986 purchased what one source estimated to be almost \$4 million in military equipment from Rumania. In that transaction, the AFL acquired armored cars, armored personnel carriers, anti-aircraft and antitank guns, and rocket launchers.<sup>19</sup>

Rumania's participation in the arms market in this region is indicative of the East Bloc's role, traditionally involving the Soviet Union, in supporting the security imperative of some of the ACS countries. Guinea is a good example. When the country attained independence and declined assistance from France, it turned to the Soviet Union for military aid. The USSR obliged with all types of military equipment--vehicles, patrol boats, aircraft, and arms--along with military training for many Guinean military personnel in the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union has supplied military equipment and training to the armed forces of Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau as well. Much of this assistance began before the countries obtained their independence from Portugal in the middle of the last decade. Some present members of Guinea-Bissau's officer corps, for example, went to the Soviet Union for military training prior to independence. Several of them command some of the country's military units. In Cape Verde, other young military officers, who may have received four or more years of training in the USSR, fill roles as political officers within some military units. In addition, by using surrogates, like the Cubans who have trained special security units in Sierra Leone, the USSR has developed security assistance relationships with other ACS countries. With these security assistance efforts, the Soviets are also furthering their own foreign policy objectives in the region.

One of the USSR's objectives is to diminish the West's influence with the ACS countries while enhancing its own interests in the region. As an example, besides the standard military aid to Cape Verde, the Soviets are also probably providing aid to the Cape Verde government to improve the capital's port and to enlarge the ship repair facilities in the country.<sup>20</sup> In return for the facilities, which can provide services to the Soviet fishing fleet in the region, Cape Verde will likely continue to refuse the United States invitation to join the ACS program.

A second objective relates to the geostrategic importance the region has as a waypoint to other areas in Africa, as well as to points farther west. From the airport in Conakry, Soviet cargo aircraft, refueled and serviced by Soviet personnel, either depart for Angola or for the return trip to the Soviet Union.

Neighboring Guinea-Bissau's airport, which has a vast amount of aircraft parking space, a runway that was lengthened several years ago, and some of the best navigation and communication equipment of any airport in the region, is an excellent alternate. One Guinea-Bissau airport official claimed in mid-1987 that Cuba wanted to expand the airport's fuel storage capacity. Cape Verde's airport facilities are a stopover point for flights to and from Cuba.<sup>21</sup>

This geostrategic outlook highlights another Soviet objective in the region--assuring accessibility to this area of Africa. Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, and Guinea are adjacent to an important sea lane that links Europe to Africa and the Middle East. With reliable and unrestricted access to at least one of these countries, the Soviet Union can monitor, and possibly react to, shipping activity in this region of the Atlantic. Aeroflot, the USSR's international airline, serves as one instrument of accessibility to the region. Almost every ACS country in the region has an Aeroflot flight that arrives and departs on a regularly scheduled basis.<sup>22</sup>

Aeroflot even lands periodically at the Mauritanian port city of Nouadhibou, which is only a few miles away from some of the richest fishing grounds in the world. With this stopover, the Soviet fishing vessels in the region can conveniently change crews without too much disruption of their fish harvesting operations. Adding to the efficiency of the harvesting operation in the region is the availability of ship repair facilities in Cape Verde and Senegal. With this ability to easily change fishing crews and repair its vessels in the region, the USSR has been able to keep some of its boats operating for years without having had to return them to the Soviet Union.

The operation of an efficient and profitable fishing industry in the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of the ACS countries has certainly been an important Soviet objective in the region. Writing on Soviet activity in Africa at the beginning of this decade, Richard Bissell noted the Soviet Union had several good reasons for developing its fishing efforts in the region. For sure, the fishing has been economically lucrative. In addition, he contends, ". . . the Soviet policymakers appear to have found an economic tool that provides them with the access they want without yet (in most African cases) assuming the responsibility for law and order. . . ." <sup>23</sup> That observation is as applicable now as it was 9 years ago.

#### Expanding the Security Imperative

As with other nations in the world, security is multifaceted for the ACS countries. Individually, in agreements among themselves, or in relations with some of the world's most

powerful states, each of the ACS governments has sought to improve its security environment. Some of these governments have been more successful in this endeavor than others.

Unfortunately, for all the ACS countries their quest for security for many years did not include looking seaward. In seeking to enhance their security imperative, these countries have now discovered an aspect of security--economic security--they have neglected for a long time. An important element of that economic security is protecting their valuable living marine resources and developing them wisely.

Before it is too late, the countries that have so far joined the ACS program have decided to use elements of their armed forces to assert their sovereignty over the important resources in their EEZs. Protected and managed properly, these assets can help these nations' economies develop. Use of their military units to monitor fishing operations and enforce regulations is a major part of that development process. But, these military units' capabilities do not meet their governments' needs. Consequently, a number of these countries have appealed to the United States for assistance.<sup>24</sup> The following section highlights the development of that assistance.

#### THE AFRICAN COASTAL SECURITY PROGRAM

When several countries on Africa's northwest coast asked the United States for assistance in protecting and managing marine resources in their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), neither those countries nor the United States Government had much information on the fishing situation off the northwest African coast. As a result, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs contracted with Resources Development Associates (RDA) to investigate the problem in the countries of Mauritania, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Cape Verde. The study later substituted Guinea for Cape Verde.

##### The RDA Report

Published in March 1985, the study concluded that the marine life in the Northwest African fishing region is "a major and valuable resource. Total value of the reported catch was approximately \$1.4 billion in 1983."<sup>25</sup> The report further stated that the region's countries can neither control nor monitor the fishing operations. Consequently, widespread illegal fishing and underreporting occurs. This means the countries are losing substantial revenue, fishing stocks are diminishing, and they "may be irreparably damaged by overfishing."<sup>26</sup>

Among its other conclusions, RDA stated:

The value of the resource taken illegally and not reported is estimated at \$400-\$600 million per year. The Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc nations operate the largest fleets in this area, and report taking one-third of the entire reported catch in the area (950,000 metric tons in 1983). This figure is commonly believed to be less than half the catch actually taken. Available data indicates the actual Soviet catch may be three times that reported. Other distant-water fleets also underreport their catch, but to a lesser extent.<sup>27</sup>

The RDA added that to solve the problem a regional approach was desirable, but admitted that most countries would prefer their own programs.<sup>28</sup>

Important to the United States security assistance effort in the region, RDA also concluded that "The West African nations need assistance in training and institution building . . . and physical equipment (i.e., surface patrol vessels, aircraft, surveillance and communications equipment)."<sup>29</sup> The RDA researchers included an important caveat to this statement when they also stated, "country programs should have a substantial technical assistance and training component."<sup>30</sup>

To emphasize this last point, the report mentioned Canada initiated a program with the Senegalese that the Canadians considered a "failure." Canada gave Senegal a DeHavilland Twin Otter, a twin-engine aircraft that was equipped with a surveillance and navigation radar and Omega navigation equipment. The aircraft had flown some overwater surveillance missions in support of a fisheries protection program. During their investigation, RDA was told by the Canadians that program management was a problem. The Canadians believed, "Ideally, you should run the program yourself for the first one or two years, then gradually phase out after capability and utility have been demonstrated and documented, and trained counterpart personnel are available to continue the program."<sup>31</sup>

The RDA offered the following recommendations. First, the region needs an effective information system. Second, the states need to clarify and develop effective fisheries policies. Finally, the region needs a project to design and implement a surveillance, monitoring and control system. The RDA, recognizing two countries which had serious problems and had requested United States assistance, recommended pilot projects in either, or both, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau. As part of any project, RDA maintained that the Department of Defense could provide both "equipment and technical assistance for surface patrol and aerial monitoring."<sup>32</sup>

An early 1988 article in the New York Times, concentrating on Guinea-Bissau, described the fishing situation in the African Coastal Security (ACS) region. The article highlights some of the problems that confront Guinea-Bissau and other countries in the ACS region.<sup>33</sup> With a per capita income of \$170 per year and few natural resources, Guinea-Bissau's EEZ represents the country's largest source of revenue. The EEZ has a potential annual catch of 300,000 tons. Seven months after Guinea-Bissau obtained independence, the USSR signed a ten-year fishing accord with the Guinea-Bissau government.<sup>34</sup>

The Soviets fared well with the accord while Guinea-Bissau did not. With the Soviet fishing crews in a position to underestimate their catch and underpay their fees, a World Bank report claimed that for the years 1982 and 1983, the USSR paid a total of \$3.7 million in fishing fees which was \$23 million less than what it should have paid Guinea-Bissau. As for a joint fishing venture begun between the two countries, after 10 years of development Guinea-Bissau's fishing company owned no boats and was \$5 million in debt to the Soviet Union.<sup>35</sup>

#### Establishing the ACS Program

Based on RDA's report and additional inputs from countries in the ACS region, DOD officials established the West African Coastal Surveillance Program in 1985. In 1986, the program became the African Coastal Security Program. The name change was due to growth in the role of the programs and in the number of countries eligible to participate.<sup>36</sup>

From 1985 to the present, the security assistance projects in the region have focused on maritime matters. Projects have included acquiring and repairing naval equipment, providing training, and improving the infrastructure that supports the ACS countries' navies or coast guard units. Using MAP funds, for instance, Guinea has obtained the patrol boats which, from a functional standpoint, have replaced inoperative Soviet-supplied vessels. Additional projects for Guinea include plans for a floating drydock and providing high frequency radios to three base stations.<sup>37</sup>

For The Gambia, ACS funds will upgrade a pier in the port of Banjul, provide radio, navigation, and radar equipment for the navy's patrol boats, and refurbish a communications base station. Guinea-Bissau has already received marine electronics and satellite navigation equipment and naval uniforms. Its Navy will also obtain hull paint for its vessels, along with some camera equipment.<sup>38</sup>

Mauritania has already received boat radios, satellite navigation equipment, radar, and long-range binoculars. Plans call for upgrading the Nouakchott naval base with communication

gear and photo lab equipment. Mauritanian naval personnel will also obtain training at United States Navy and Coast Guard institutions.<sup>39</sup> Senegal, as mentioned earlier, is using ACS money to construct an austere forward operating base on the Casamance River. Until Sierra Leone recently received two Chinese patrol boats, it had no operable patrol vessels. It will receive a US-built, 105-foot patrol craft in 1989. Liberia is seeking to repair some of its patrol boats. It has also requested a new 110-foot patrol boat.<sup>40</sup> Problems with Brooke Amendment sanctions may pose difficulties in completing the Liberian projects.

Training for the ACS countries' naval units has occurred in Senegal, The Gambia, and Mauritania. United States Coast Guard Mobile Training Teams (MTT) went to these countries in 1987 to provide instruction in maritime law enforcement and to Guinea and Guinea-Bissau in 1988. Evidence that this initial maritime focus has been beneficial to the region while furthering United States interests is provided from countries receiving this training. Several have commented quite favorably on the value of the information and the usefulness of the techniques they have received.<sup>41</sup>

#### Results of the ACS Program

As a consequence of United States efforts with some of the ACS countries, the enforcement situation in the EEZs off northwest Africa is beginning to change. In 1987, Guinea-Bissau apprehended 20 boats violating its fishing laws and levied \$20 million in fines.<sup>42</sup> In addition to levying fines, the Guinea-Bissau government also confiscates the catch of any violator. According to a Guinea-Bissau naval officer, the government then sells the catch, which produces revenue for the government and puts more food in the marketplace. Guinea-Bissau has also signed a \$4 million per year fishing agreement with the European Economic Community. With this accord, it will receive \$3 million more per year than it was receiving from the USSR.<sup>43</sup>

Other changes have recently occurred in the region. Liberia, Senegal, and Guinea-Bissau have stopped allowing the Soviets to fish in their EEZs. Sierra Leone stated it will cancel its agreement with the USSR, and Mauritania is supposedly negotiating a tougher pact with the Soviets. Outside the ACS region, both Morocco and Equatorial Guinea state they too will no longer allow Soviet fishing in their EEZs.<sup>44</sup>

In addition to these developments, the regional aspect of the program has begun to take shape. Naval officials in Guinea-Bissau have discussed the matter of hot pursuit into neighboring EEZs with government officials in Senegal and Guinea. Sierra Leone and Guinea have concluded an agreement that recognizes the need to exchange information on activity in their EEZs.

Maritime assistance is only one of the areas where the United States can offer much-needed assistance. Another challenge which confronts the ACS countries is surveillance and mobility. Shortcomings in these areas can be effectively met through enhanced military airpower.

#### **THE SHORTCOMINGS OF MILITARY AIRPOWER IN THE ACS REGION**

All African Coastal Security (ACS) countries have naval vessels they use for patrolling their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). The number of vessels at sea in the ACS region's EEZs at any particular time, however, is quite small. Maintenance needs and replenishment requirements limit the number of sea days. Moreover, when actually at sea, each vessel's ability to monitor activities and enforce regulations is limited to a relatively small radius of action when compared to the vast areas it is responsible for covering.

##### **A Lack of Aerial Maritime Surveillance Capability**

Consequently, aerial maritime surveillance is essential to attain the level of patrolling efficiency the countries need to assure success in their EEZ enforcement programs. All the ACS participants know they must have airborne surveillance. The Resources Development Associates (RDA) report deemed it critical to any program's success.<sup>45</sup> Radar equipped aircraft performing reconnaissance and monitoring missions on a frequent basis would be of tremendous benefit to the ACS countries. In hours, an aircraft can observe and report fishing activity over a portion of the region's EEZs that would take days for patrol boats to cover.

Other benefits accrue to those countries which possess aircraft performing overwater surveillance missions. These aircraft can monitor the passing ship traffic for pollution, which is an annoying problem for the ACS countries. The same aircraft can also watch for smuggling activity. Finally, if these aircraft were properly equipped, they could also perform search and rescue missions. In sum, not only would aircraft flying reconnaissance missions over the EEZs be a great force multiplier for the naval units, they would enhance the armed forces capabilities to perform other needed missions for their governments.

Unfortunately, the ACS countries' aerial maritime surveillance capability during 1988 was almost nonexistent. At that time, only Mauritania's air unit and Senegal's air force had operable aircraft dedicated to the overwater aerial surveillance mission. Mauritania's air unit, attached to the army and called the Groupement Aerienne de la Republique Islamique de Mauritanie

(GARIM), has two Piper Cheyennes for the mission. The Senegalese Air Force operates the Twin Otter, which the Canadians intended Senegal's Fishery Department should operate.<sup>46</sup> To what degree these countries effectively use these aircraft is a major question. The GARIM, for instance, has had problems financing its flying hours and obtaining spare parts for some of its aircraft. Additionally, as noted previously, the Canadians found shortcomings in the manner which Senegal maintained and used the Twin Otter.<sup>47</sup>

At the end of 1988, none of the other ACS countries possessed an operational maritime surveillance capability. Guinea and Guinea-Bissau's air forces are principally equipped with Soviet jet fighter aircraft but each country does have a Cessna 337 aircraft which in the past were used to perform surveillance missions. These aircraft, which are similar to the twin-engine O-2, currently are in storage and in relatively good condition. The United States, recognizing the possibility of an overwater surveillance role, has provided money to refurbish them. In addition, two personnel from Guinea-Bissau are obtaining instruction on the aircraft in the United States.<sup>48</sup> If the reconditioning and training go as planned, each country may have one aircraft performing surveillance missions by early 1989.

Three other countries in the ACS region--Cape Verde, The Gambia, and Sierra Leone--have no aerial surveillance capability because they have no aircraft in their armed forces. The Gambia is in a position where it can possibly rely upon Senegal's capabilities. Cape Verde had two Soviet-made aircraft which it gave up; it has not obtained replacement aircraft. Sierra Leone's military has no experience with fixed-wing aircraft.

In Liberia's case, the two Cessna 208s it recently received from the United States were not suitable for an overwater surveillance mission because they are single-engine aircraft. Early in 1987, one of these aircraft, grossly overloaded, crashed into the Atlantic Ocean shortly after takeoff from an airport in Monrovia. This accident occurred 5 months after a US Army Aviation Mobile Training Teams (MTT) had completed 6 months of intensive instruction on operating and maintaining the aircraft. Similar in some respects to the Canadians' Twin Otter experience in Senegal, the United States Government learned that donating an aircraft, and even providing some training, may not produce the results the donor had intended. Rather, when the equipment is provided it must include a training program of sufficient magnitude to build an operations and maintenance foundation which will permit the program to survive over an extended period of time.



### A Lack of Airlift Capability

This paucity of aerial maritime surveillance capability among the ACS states is only half of a major problem confronting these countries vis-a-vis their lack of military airpower. In addition to being inadequate in the reconnaissance role, the air forces or air units cannot provide sufficient airlift for either the army units they should support or the other government agencies that need air transportation. In a region where in many cases a road network is either nonexistent, inadequate, or deteriorating, airlift would greatly enhance a government's security and development efforts.

Two examples illustrate this point. In Liberia during the height of the rainy season, a transport truck driver claimed in 1986 that it took him 14 days to deliver a load of goods from Monrovia to another town farther down the coast. Numerous downpours periodically washed out parts of the roadway. To ford some streams, he had to unload, cross, and then reload his vehicle. He delivered his goods to a town that has a laterite airstrip and an army unit next to it. The same trip from Monrovia to the airstrip, in the slowest aircraft, would take about one hour.

Despite Mauritania's efforts to assert its neutrality in the Western Sahara conflict, the Polisario, insurgents fighting against Morocco, have traversed Mauritanian territory with relative impunity for years. The GARIM has practically no capability to move troops in a timely manner from an air base at Atar to several airstrips along its long, open desert border with the Western Sahara. If the GARIM had better airlift capability, Mauritania's army would be in an improved position to enforce the government's sovereignty over its territory.

Despite the obvious need, the military airlift capability among the ACS countries, like the maritime surveillance capability, is deficient. Down to one Cessna 208 and several smaller, older aircraft, Liberia's Air Reconnaissance Unit (ARU) many times could not provide airlift to government officials unless their agency paid for the gas. Mauritania's GARIM has only a handful of well-worn, small transport aircraft which could fly troops to border areas. With the difficulties Cape Verde was having with the maintenance of two AN-26s, it gave them up and received no replacement. Guinea's air force has two Soviet-supplied transports which fly on an infrequent basis. Guinea-Bissau had several AN-2s, but they have departed the country. No other aircraft have replaced them. Among the ACS countries, only Senegal appears to have a fairly reliable military air transport capability.

### The Need for Assistance in Developing Airpower Capability

This lack of air transportation and reconnaissance capability is characteristic of military organizations in many underdeveloped nations. United States military officers who have studied the development of airpower in underdeveloped countries contend that many of these nations have focused on combat capability, i.e., the procurement of strike aircraft, when developing their military airpower. As a result, many of these countries have neglected developing an adequate reconnaissance, surveillance, and airlift capability for their armed forces.<sup>49</sup>

Among the ACS countries, the airpower situations in Guinea's and Guinea-Bissau's air forces are classic examples of this. Both countries have Soviet-made MiG-21s for air combat missions. However, neither presently has any ability to perform offshore reconnaissance missions, nor do their air forces have much capability to move troops or supplies to isolated posts along their borders. With military assistance to these two nations, the Soviets developed an air component with some "combat" capability, but little to no capability to fly either maritime surveillance or an adequate number of air transport missions.

This assessment of the ACS countries' airpower capabilities also leads to a general conclusion about the future of military airpower in the region. An observer of the development of military airpower in Africa feels that air forces on the continent will depend upon external assistance well into the next decade.<sup>50</sup> A dependency upon external assistance for the improvement of their military units' airpower capability will certainly be the case for the ACS countries. That assistance may come from one or more sources; it also can be in many different forms, e.g., fighters and helicopters. For most of the ACS countries, a relatively small amount of assistance will have a major impact on the development of their military airpower capabilities. Additionally, for the ACS countries the proper development of their airpower capability also will determine the effectiveness of the ACS program. Accomplished properly, that development can also significantly improve the military airlift capability in the region.

### A United States Role in Developing Airpower

Among the possible sources of external assistance for developing airpower capabilities in the ACS region, the United States is the most logical candidate. France, as noted earlier, is involved with many of the armies in the region; it also has important commitments elsewhere in Africa that make demands on its resources. Moreover, some countries, like Guinea, are sensitive about too much French involvement in their affairs, particularly with regard to military matters.<sup>51</sup> The Soviets are certainly not interested in adding to the ACS countries' aerial

maritime surveillance capability. Pressure from the Soviet government is probably one reason why the Cessna 337s in Guinea and Guinea-Bissau stopped flying several years ago. In addition, the USSR does not appear concerned about improving the military airlift capabilities of the countries it has assisted in the past with military equipment. The AN-26s and AN-2s are gone from Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau, respectively. Guinea-Bissau Air Force officials have repeatedly complained about the inability to obtain spare parts they need to keep their Soviet transport aircraft operational.

That leaves the United States, which introduced the ACS program and is committed to its development, as the most likely source of assistance for improving the region's aerial maritime surveillance capability. The United States, however, should not consider improvement of the aerial maritime surveillance capability separate from the equally important need to enhance the airlift capability in the region. With the proper approach, the United States can improve the region's capabilities in both of these important airpower mission areas.

Part of that approach is providing an aircraft suitable for both an overwater reconnaissance and an airlift role. The United States had the right concept when it provided Liberia's ARU with two Cessna 208s for the airlift mission within Liberia. With its lightweight, simple construction, roominess, and short-takeoff and landing flight characteristics, the 208 could take passengers and cargo to and from many of the small, unimproved airstrips scattered around the country. Besides these standard roles, it also functioned as air ambulance, mail courier, and paymaster when carrying military personnel to and from the outlying posts around the country. Nevertheless, as a single engine aircraft, the 208 was less than optimum for performing the overwater surveillance mission. If the United States had supplied the ARU with an aircraft like the 208, but with two engines like the Twin Otter the Canadians had given the Senegalese, Liberia would have had a perfect dual capability (airlift and maritime surveillance) aircraft. With two twin-engine aircraft of this type, the ARU would have had the potential to provide many valuable services to Liberia's army, navy, and other government agencies.

The ACS program now provides the United States an opportunity to develop the maritime surveillance capability in the ACS region, as well as to improve the region's airlift capability. To start the ACS program, the RDA recommended the United States initiate pilot programs in Guinea and Guinea-Bissau. The DOD has begun those programs. When rehabilitation of the Cessna 337s is complete, these countries will have a nascent aerial maritime surveillance capability to accompany the present capability in Mauritania and Senegal. The maritime surveillance aspect of the ACS program is thus making progress. However, some concerns about this capability do arise.

For instance, one aircraft operating per country does not provide much surveillance capability. If a mishap occurs to either the Twin Otter in Senegal or a Cessna in either Guinea or Guinea-Bissau, the country losing the aircraft also loses its aerial surveillance capability. In these countries, when an aircraft is down for repairs or periodic maintenance, no other airplane will be available to take its place. In addition, neither these aircraft nor the Piper Cheyennes in Mauritania will last forever. Sooner or later these aircraft will need replacing. Finally, some countries--Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Cape Verde--will still have no aerial maritime surveillance capability.

Given these concerns and the ACS countries' reliance upon external assistance for maintaining its military airpower capability, the United States should look at the future role it will play in the ACS program. Part of that role will be to maintain and improve the maritime surveillance capability of the ACS countries. As a supplement, the United States should consider the need to improve the airlift capability of these countries. Ideally, when the opportunity arises, the United States should develop both of these capabilities with an assistance project that encompasses both of these important airpower missions. Having an aircraft available that can perform both missions in the ACS countries should be a future objective of United States Government agencies concerned with the ACS program.

#### A Role for the US Air Force

Looking at the ACS countries' airpower needs, is there a possibility the US Air Force can assist them in improving an airpower capability that ranges from mediocre to nonexistent? From a United States national security strategy and an Air Force doctrinal standpoint, the answer appears to be yes. Air Force Manual (AFM) 1-1, Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force, identifies surveillance/reconnaissance and airlift as two of the service's primary missions. Well equipped, trained, and maintained for these roles, the Air Force can perform them almost anywhere in the world. Another primary mission of the US Air Force is special operations. In defining the special operations mission, AFM 1-1 states that part of that mission may include supporting collective security.<sup>52</sup> The manual does not, however, define collective security.

The recent draft of US Army and Air Force FM 100-20/AFM 2-20, Military Operations in Low-Intensity Conflict, addresses the multi-service doctrine and procedures applicable to military operations in low-intensity conflict, better known in military parlance as LIC. The manual discusses the importance of collective security to LIC. A major element of collective security is the use of foreign assistance programs to "build

healthy governments which in turn contribute to a more secure, stable world environment."<sup>53</sup> As a result, "the principal US military instrument in LIC is security assistance in the form of training, equipment, and combat support."<sup>54</sup> With this assistance to a country's nation building effort, the United States also deters the LIC threat.

Other United States Government writings allude to the linkage between collective security, LIC, security assistance, and nation building. President Reagan's National Security Strategy of the United States outlines the strategy for LIC with a strong emphasis placed on security assistance:

But the most appropriate application of military power is usually indirect through security assistance--training, advisory help, logistics and the supply of essential military equipment. Recipients of such assistance bear the primary responsibility for promoting their own security interests with the U.S. aid provided.<sup>55</sup>

The administration's annual security assistance publication, the aforementioned Congressional Presentation Document, asserts the importance of collective security as one of the twin pillars of national security strategy so important to protecting United States interests worldwide. As part of that strategy, "Security assistance is an essential instrument in the implementation and integration of these twin pillars of our national policy."<sup>56</sup> An Air Force officer's outlook offered in a study on the US Air Force role in the underdeveloped countries of the world also highlights the importance of security assistance as a deterrent to LIC and a significant element of collective security. For the author, operations of a collective security nature, which would encompass security assistance programs, are intended to make nations the United States Government aids more militarily self-reliant and to encourage nation building.<sup>57</sup>

The ACS program, which in its brief existence has provided needed equipment and training to naval units in the region, is a form of collective security. With this United States security assistance, the ACS navies are more capable than ever of performing their missions. In accomplishing these missions, they are contributing to the success of the ACS program. They are contributing to the security of the region and to the security of their respective governments. As such, they are making a significant contribution to the nation building effort, and thereby enhancing United States interests in the region.

Like the naval units, the existing air force components of the ACS countries also need assistance to make a much-needed contribution to the ACS effort. With the proper assistance, that contribution will significantly improve the maritime surveillance

capability in the region. In addition, if that assistance is the right type, it also will provide needed military airlift capability to the region. Like the naval units, the air force units will contribute to a nation building effort in the region. They also will contribute to one of the pillars of United States national security strategy--collective security.

As seen, the US Air Force has identified special operations as having a role in collective security. It follows, then, that the US Air Force has a security assistance mission to perform, much as it has a reconnaissance or an airlift mission. From the viewpoint of United States national security strategy and the Air Force's own doctrine, the US Air Force has a role in the ACS program if United States policymakers decide to improve the region's airpower capability. That role would be twofold: (1) To improve both the maritime surveillance and airlift capabilities of the ACS countries' existing air units; (2) To develop an air unit where none currently exists. All the ACS countries, now and in the future, will require assistance for their airpower needs. Many of these countries would like that assistance to come from the United States. Most of them would like that assistance as soon as possible. However, despite their needs and wishes and despite what United States strategy and US Air Force doctrine state, a US Air Force role in the ACS program in the near future is not likely.

#### **THE ACS PROGRAM AND THE US AIR FORCE: CONFRONTING REALITIES**

A number of different factors combine to prevent the US Air Force from having a near-term role in developing and sustaining airpower capability in the African Coastal Security (ACS) countries. Some of these factors are related to United States policy choices and the region's characteristics. Other factors are related more to the situation within the US Air Force. Together, these factors severely limit a security assistance role for the Air Force in the ACS program.

##### **Lack of Funds and Other Factors**

One of the most significant factors is money. Funds available for security assistance programs have diminished considerably in recent years.<sup>58</sup> For 1988, Congress enacted 85 percent of the administration's requested budget for worldwide security assistance. Of the approved amount, Congress earmarked 95 percent of that money for eight countries--Israel, Egypt, Greece, Turkey, The Philippines, Guatemala, Morocco and Pakistan. Earmarking leaves little money to distribute to other countries around the world which are less important to United States national security interests than the aforementioned nations.<sup>59</sup>

Many security assistance programs in these less strategically significant areas of the world have, in fact, faced drastic reductions in their programs' budgets. A security assistance program that promoted regional security in the Caribbean Basin with training, patrol boats, and aircraft lost most of its requested funding for 1988.<sup>60</sup> The ACS program allocation for 1988 was in doubt for a period of time. For now, it has continued funding. However, with the current security assistance budget situation, expansion of the ACS budget so the United States can develop the airpower capability of the ACS countries is not a realistic expectation. Unless the ACS nations can obtain financing from another source, assistance from the United States to improve the airpower capability in the region is highly unlikely.

Within the ACS countries, money is also certainly an issue. With so many problems confronting their governments and so many demands on their budgets, these nations are not as financially committed to maintaining or improving their military airpower capability as they should be. Money to adequately maintain and operate the militaries' aircraft is often lacking. Consequently, flight time is limited; some pilots and mechanics are not well trained; short of funds, units often defer maintenance.

Adding to this lack of proper financing is a cavalier attitude toward aviation that exists in some ACS countries' air units. Poor training, combined with a lack of discipline within some units, means a few pilots and mechanics take an approach to their jobs that jeopardizes mission accomplishment and, at times, courts disaster. As a result, a valuable resource may sit idle, fall into disrepair, or, in the worst case, become a premature piece of junk.

Therefore, the United States' current effort to renovate the Cessna 337 aircraft to perform the surveillance mission in Guinea-Bissau and Guinea also becomes another factor that precludes immediate US Air Force activity in the region. The United States should monitor the proper operation and maintenance of these airplanes after they begin their surveillance missions. The respective governments must allocate enough money to the aircraft's operations and maintenance expenses to keep them performing surveillance missions on a regular basis. If the governments do budget adequately, and the air units maintain a sound flying operation, then the United States Government should consider an Air Force effort to further develop military airpower in the region.

A look at some aspects of the overall United States security assistance program also provides some reasons why an Air Force role in the ACS program is not practicable. With regard to a security assistance organization (SAO) that administers security assistance programs abroad, several problems arise. One problem

is that the SAOs, like the one in Liberia, do not have the authority to provide advice or training to host country military organizations they are "assisting."<sup>61</sup> Instead, an SAO's main purpose is to "administer" a security assistance program.<sup>62</sup> (SAO personnel usually stay at least one year in a country while performing their security assistance duties.)

The Mobile Training Team (MTT), which legislation limits to six-months duty in a country, is the main training and advising apparatus of a United States security assistance project. The MTT trains host-nation military personnel to be the cadre that will train the other unit's personnel in a particular skill. The MTT's task is, therefore, considered to be "mission-specific."<sup>63</sup> This combination of the limiting of SAO personnel's duties to administrative roles and an MTT's length of time on a training program to less than 6 months would seriously handicap a US Air Force role in building the airpower capability of one or more ACS countries. A US Air Force role in the region would probably mean the introduction of a new aircraft to a particular air unit in the region. An MTT would work with the country's key personnel for about 6 months and then it would have to leave, regardless of those personnel's capabilities to operate and maintain the aircraft. With the MTT's departure, training stops because the SAO cannot start where the MTT left off.

To provide the right continuity to an assistance program, such as the introduction of a new aircraft, the security assistance program needs more flexibility. The program must be able to react better to circumstances that the laws cannot possibly foresee. If, for example, a unit obviously needs more training and transition time from the MTT, at least part of the MTT should be able to stay longer than 6 months. Otherwise, some SAO personnel should have the authority to provide training or advice in the absence of an MTT.

Another limiting factor in the security assistance program is also a probable lack of foreign language skills among members of an MTT that would go to an ACS country. Beforehand language mastery is particularly important if an MTT's in-country time is limited to 6 months. For personnel in an Air Force MTT, their selection to work with units in the ACS countries would probably depend more upon their skill and availability as a mechanic or an instructor pilot than upon their ability to communicate in French or Portuguese. Fortunately, English is the lingua franca for aviation. Therefore, aviators in the ACS countries may be willing to learn English if it means being able to receive assistance from a US Air Force MTT. Nevertheless, an MTT member's inability to speak the official language will detract from his overall effectiveness, particularly if his duty time is limited to 6 months. Ironically, the United States military personnel whose foreign language skills would be the best in the training situation would probably belong to SAO members who have been in the country, or at least in the region, for a while.



### Factors Within the US Air Force

Looking at the Air Force organization that would be involved in a possible security assistance role with the ACS countries adds to the current impracticality of a role for the service in this region. In the US Air Force, the Military Airlift Command (MAC) is the organization that is in charge of special operations forces. These are the forces that, according to US Air Force doctrine, could perform the collective security role for the Air Force. At present, these forces have concentrated on developing their combat capability for the low intensity conflict environment.<sup>64</sup> Several years may pass before any special operations units within MAC are equipped and trained to perform security assistance missions of the type needed to develop the airpower capability of underdeveloped nations like the ACS countries.

The MAC plays the most significant role for the Air Force with regard to air operations in Sub-Saharan Africa. But, the command sees that role in terms of performing various types of airlift missions for the United States, not in terms of directly performing security assistance missions that enhance collective security. A recent history of MAC's role in Sub-Saharan Africa cites six main categories of MAC operations on the continent. All the categories help the US Air Force "To protect America's geopolitical interests in Sub-Saharan Africa and meet national economic and security obligations to African states . . . ." <sup>65</sup> All the categories address different types of airlift missions MAC has performed in Africa. The study does not address a MAC role in security assistance for African nations that need help developing their airpower capability. For now, at least, the US Air Force appears to identify its primary role in Sub-Saharan Africa almost exclusively as one that requires it to provide airlift to, from, or over the continent.

### No Suitable Aircraft

A lack of the "right" aircraft is probably the most significant factor within the Air Force which shows it is not in a position to make the type of security assistance effort the ACS countries need for improving their airpower capability. To develop their airpower capability, the ACS countries need an aircraft that can perform both maritime surveillance and airlift missions. That aircraft has to meet certain criteria. One recent examination of airpower needs for underdeveloped countries stated those criteria quite succinctly: "The aircraft should be easy to operate, easy to maintain, inexpensive to buy, and inexpensive to operate."<sup>66</sup> The MAC does not have this type of aircraft that it could use to either improve or to develop the airpower capability of the ACS countries.

The ACS countries' air units, like so many others around Africa, need an aircraft that meets the aforementioned criteria and still performs the required missions, namely overwater surveillance and airlift. Their need is for a twin-engine, high wing, small transport aircraft that has short-takeoff and landing (STOL) characteristics. The twin engines give the aircraft overwater capability and a margin of safety when operating over jungle terrain and vast expanses of desert.

The high wing provides two major advantages over a low wing aircraft. First, it is a better observation platform. An aircrew needs good visibility for the overwater surveillance mission. Observers can photograph and monitor fishing vessels without having to sharply bank the aircraft at the low altitudes and low speeds necessary to properly observe a fishing vessel's operation. Second, when operating from unimproved airstrips, of which there are a number in the ACS countries, the high wing keeps the engine and propellers higher above the ground than a low wing. A low-wing aircraft which is taxiing on a deeply rutted or uneven surface is more likely to strike a propeller or to ingest debris into an engine than a high-wing airplane. The same rationale holds for operations from airstrips that are overgrown with high grass. (As an example of the type of airstrips in the ACS region, Liberia has over 70 airstrips but only two airports with asphalt surfaces. The airstrips have either laterite or grass surfaces.)

The STOL features on the type of aircraft the ACS countries' air units need give several advantages to an airplane performing both the reconnaissance and airlift roles. To closely observe fishing operations, for example, the STOL aircraft is very maneuverable at low speeds (below 100 knots) and at low altitudes. For the air transport mission, the aircraft must operate from short airfields. An airplane with STOL characteristics can operate in a low visibility environment with no navigation aids and have greater margins of safety than a four-engine aircraft like a C-130. The small, twin-engine aircraft can maneuver more easily around terrain and obstacles in preparation for landing and, after takeoff, better than a larger, heavier aircraft which needs to maneuver at higher speeds and therefore needs more airspace.

Additionally, from a maintenance standpoint, the aircraft must be durable and simple to repair and to service. The engines, for instance, should not need frequent inspections and should be capable of operating with different types of fuel. The need for special tools and a variety of other support equipment should be at a minimum. In sum, it should be forgiving enough so a bit of negligence does not become a fatal error.

Without an airplane of this type in its active inventory, the US Air Force can do little to help the ACS countries develop their airpower capability. Some aircraft used during the Vietnam era might be available for these roles; but, they pose additional problems. One is the availability of spare parts. Another is the extra expense of rehabilitating the aircraft. Still another would be finding people that would work in the ACS countries with the host country military personnel on these types of aircraft.

On the other hand, using an aircraft already in the US Air Force inventory solves many of these problems. Spare parts are available. Active-duty maintenance and flight personnel are already trained on that aircraft and would be available to assist the ACS countries. A country could obtain additional or replacement aircraft at a good price. And, most importantly, if the aircraft is in the US Air Force inventory, many other countries, including the ACS nations, would like to see it as part of their air forces or air units.

Presently, however, the Air Force does not have an aircraft in its active inventory that has all the characteristics which an aircraft in the ACS countries' air units requires. Combine this fact with the other factors also mentioned and the US Air Force does not currently have a viable role in the ACS program. Without changes in these factors, the US Air Force cannot do for the air units of the region what DOD began doing for the ACS countries' naval units. Some future developments within the Air Force may, however, enable the service to contribute to the ACS program several years from now.

#### **PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

Several developments within the US Air Force can readily make a future role for the US Air Force in the African Coastal Security (ACS) program more feasible. If these developments occur, innovative applications of these developments to the situation in the ACS region will begin solving the military airpower problem for the ACS countries. The most significant development is the pending US Air Force procurement of an aircraft that has the potential to solve both the maritime surveillance and airlift problems for the ACS countries.

##### The C-27 and ACS

The US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), which has the responsibility for United States military operations in Central and South America, needs an aircraft to fill the gap in airlift between the C-130 and the helicopter. With its present fixed-wing airlift capability, USSOUTHCOM determined it was unable to use about 9,500 of the more than 10,000 airfields in Central and

South America.<sup>67</sup> The USSOUTHCOM needs a twin-engine, short-takeoff and landing (STOL) transport to perform airlift missions where it is not possible to use the larger and heavier C-130. The Air Force, through Military Airlift Command (MAC), proposed procurement of an aircraft, called the C-27, to fulfill this airlift mission. Due to cuts in DOD spending last year, the Air Force dropped the request for purchase of the aircraft from its 1989 budget.<sup>68</sup>

The MAC has looked at many twin-engine, light transport aircraft to perform the role of the C-27. The command is seeking to procure an aircraft already on the market. Purchase of an aircraft in production will keep the overall cost of the program lower than if the Air Force sought a totally new airframe. The MAC has looked at aircraft ranging in price from \$2.5 million to over \$20 million each and intends to continue its effort to obtain a C-27 aircraft.

One aircraft under MAC consideration was the Scout Skytrader. It costs about \$2.5 million and has capabilities well-suited to the reconnaissance and airlift needs of the ACS countries. If the United States purchased this aircraft, or one similar to it, MAC would have a relatively inexpensive aircraft that it could use in the ACS program and in improving the airlift capability in the region. Mauritania and Senegal will need a follow-on aircraft for their maritime surveillance missions. In addition, they can also use the aircraft to provide military transport. Guinea-Bissau and Guinea will eventually need to replace their Cessnas; they may also seek to expand their surveillance capability. In addition, both these countries air forces need to improve their airlift capability. If these countries use their Cessnas effectively, they would also be candidates for either the C-27 or an aircraft like it.

Another development may also occur within the Air Force that would make a future role for MAC in the ACS program more realistic. One study concluded that C-130s and heavy helicopters, for example, are not particularly adaptable to an Air Force security assistance program in underdeveloped countries. In the inventory of an underdeveloped nation's air force, these types of aircraft are too complex and too expensive for these countries' military organizations to maintain and operate.<sup>69</sup> As part of MAC's expansion into the world of special operations, particularly into the area of collective security, the same study identified the Command's need for a STOL transport to fulfill its role in security assistance programs.<sup>70</sup> By designating the C-27 as that STOL transport for the collective security role, the Air Force would provide special operations personnel with an excellent instrument for developing airpower capability. The C-27 will give the US Air Force both the aircraft and the personnel needed to develop the airpower capabilities of the ACS countries, as well as the airpower capabilities of other underdeveloped nations.

For example, an Air Force special operations cadre, designed to operate and maintain the C-27 in underdeveloped countries, would make a very effective training unit. Sent as an Mobile Training Teams (MTT) to one of the ACS countries, the cadre's mission would be to integrate the C-27 into the ACS program. If lawmakers would give an MTT more flexibility with regard to the amount of time it can stay in a country, a C-27 cadre working with an air unit certainly would have more success with training than the Army Aviation MTT had in Liberia in 1986.

#### An Innovation for the ACS Region

If some of these developments occur, prospects arise for introducing a new approach to United States security assistance in the ACS region. Should the air forces in Guinea-Bissau and Guinea fare well with their rehabilitated Cessna aircraft, a promising evolution for the ACS program can occur. To enhance the program and develop the region's airpower capability, the United States could offer each country one or more C-27 aircraft. The offer, however, would not be in the form of a standard grant. Instead, the United States could lease or loan the aircraft to one or both countries for 5 years.

Working with United States security assistance personnel assigned to the region, these air forces would have to maintain and operate the aircraft according to agreed upon standards. If a country's air unit neither maintains nor operates the aircraft according to those standards, it has two choices. It can return the aircraft to the United States Government, and it will go back into the US Air Force inventory, or the country can pay the United States for the aircraft, less depreciation, and keep it in its inventory.

In return for adhering to the standards, Security Assistance Organization (SAO) personnel would help the units with advice and training throughout the five-year period. (Congress needs to change the legislation pertaining to SAO participation in this type of assistance.) The SAO personnel are in the best position to provide the continuity a long-term assistance program needs in many underdeveloped countries' military organizations. The Canadian government's disappointment after its introduction of the Twin Otter to Senegal and the US Army Aviation MTT's experience with Liberia's ARU show the need for assistance over a period of time longer than a few months.

In the early stages of the project, the United States, or perhaps a third-party donor, would pay a major portion of the aircraft's operational and maintenance costs. Year by year the recipient nation would pay more of those expenses. By the end of the five-year period, a country would have full responsibility for the operational and maintenance costs of the aircraft. If

the country is using the aircraft properly, it should have no problem obtaining enough revenue from the enforcement of its fishing regulations to finance the aircraft's expenses.

With the C-27 aircraft in the MAC inventory, special operations personnel will be qualified to operate and maintain it. Some of those special operations personnel would comprise the MTTs that could deploy on a C-27 security assistance project to countries like Guinea-Bissau and Guinea. These personnel should have language training as part of their role in fulfilling MAC's collective security missions. Therefore, some special operations pilots and maintenance personnel would know either French or Portuguese. If Guinea and Guinea-Bissau obtain the C-27 aircraft, a cadre of those special operations personnel could go as an MTT to help the Guinean air forces' transition to a C-27 operation.

Working with these air forces, the MTT would stay until it is confident the units can satisfactorily handle both the maritime surveillance and the airlift missions. The United States Government should not impose an arbitrary limit of 6 months as the maximum amount of time the MTT can stay with the units. Rather, at least part of the MTT would stay until the operation is safe, operating properly, and SAO personnel are satisfied they can handle standard training and advisory matters after the entire MTT departs. To maintain standards, some members of the MTT could return periodically during the 5 years to check on the progress of the units. The MTT members could, for example, administer annual flying proficiency examinations to the countries' C-27 pilots.

In the absence of the MTT, SAO personnel, over the five-year period, would perform some training and advisory roles with the air units. The SAO personnel involved with the C-27 project would be part of a regional SAO for the ACS countries. With security assistance allocations to Liberia being significantly cut, the number of SAO personnel in Monrovia will diminish.

Like an MTT that is mission-oriented, the regional SAO would also have a mission orientation. That mission would be to keep the ACS program functioning properly. This does not mean the SAO runs the program for the ACS countries' governments and military organizations. Rather, the SAO should ascertain that future Military Assistance Program and International Military Education and Training projects in the region reinforce the ACS program. It also means the regional SAO would be the United States Government's agent for matters related to the ACS program. And, in the absence of MTTs, the SAO, comprised primarily of Navy, Coast Guard, and Air Force officer and enlisted personnel, would have the authority to advise and train the ACS countries' air units as needed.

With a regional SAO overseeing the C-27 project during the five-year loan or lease period, as well as other projects for all the ACS countries, the United States would signal this region, and other parts of Africa as well, that it intends to make the ACS program a permanent mission for the region's military organizations. For the ACS countries, the program must become a mission that the naval and air units perform almost every day. They will need the tools and the training to perform those missions. Therefore, if the pilot program countries of Guinea and Guinea-Bissau satisfactorily handle the C-27 project over the five-year period, the aircraft should become a permanent part of their military aircraft inventory--at no further charge to their governments.

If the C-27 project is successful in Guinea and Guinea-Bissau, the United States Government can then explore possibilities for using the C-27 in other ACS countries. Senegal and Mauritania will need replacement aircraft. Liberia, whose Air Reconnaissance Unit is now called an air force, is a candidate for a C-27 if it can obtain more than spasmodic relief from Brooke Amendment sanctions. Since Sierra Leone, The Gambia, and Cape Verde have no air units, they could ask neighboring countries to help with maritime surveillance measures until they, too, obtain one or more aircraft that can perform the mission.

One can only speculate on the results that will come from these proposed innovations. Certainly, successful incorporation of a C-27 aircraft, or an aircraft like it, would greatly enhance the ACS program in this region of Africa. In addition, an aircraft of this type, adequately maintained and properly operated, would significantly improve the armed forces' airlift capability in a region that desperately needs it.

#### Indirect Benefits

Possibilities exist that other benefits could accrue to the region if the United States supports the ACS program by using the US Air Force to develop the ACS countries' airpower capabilities. John Chipman speaks of the need for Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) in the West African region. He speaks of a CBM as having the effect of "turning the military states into a collective defense potential."<sup>71</sup> A United States commitment to the ACS program that expands into the development of airpower to support the program is contributing to the collective defense potential of the region. If one country relies on another nation's aerial maritime surveillance operation to provide information on illegal fishing operations, it is also reinforcing the concept of collective defense.

As mentioned, cooperative efforts have begun among the ACS countries. Additional tools for the ACS program, like aircraft, can add to the cooperative effort and act as a CBM for the

region. Successfully expanding the region's airpower capability can even make the ACS program an important part of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) defense and Accord de Non Aggression et d'Assistance en Matiere de Defense (ANAD) defense protocols. In the future, ECOWAS funds, for example, could finance several aircraft operating throughout the ACS region. This would be a way of providing maritime surveillance capability to nations, like Sierra Leone, that need airpower capability but have none.

Besides adding to the effectiveness of West Africa's regional organizations, the ACS program has the potential to expand into other coastal regions of Africa. Other countries outside the current ACS region are assuredly watching developments in the program. In the future, some of those countries will need security assistance. After the fighting stops in Angola and Mozambique, for example, those countries may look to the United States for help, much like Guinea and Guinea-Bissau are doing. Successfully developing the airpower capability for some of the ACS countries would provide the US Air Force with the experience it could use in other endeavors, similar to ACS, in other areas of the continent. With C-27s in its inventory and with personnel who have performed duties as MTT and SAO personnel among the ACS countries, MAC would certainly have the tools and the expertise for developing airpower in other areas of Africa.

### Conclusion

Writing over a year ago, an observer of the United States military assistance effort in Africa concluded that, "This would be an appropriate moment (there is not much to lose) for the present administration to attempt in its waning months to develop a fresh approach to all official U.S. resource transfers abroad."<sup>72</sup> With the ACS program, the Reagan administration developed a fresh approach to the United States military assistance effort in Africa. That approach is oriented toward enabling African military organizations to accomplish missions, on almost a daily basis, which are important to their countries' security and development. Hopefully, this study has added another dimension to this new approach to the United States military assistance effort in a region of Africa.

Other observers of the worldwide United States security assistance effort are well aware of that effort's importance to underdeveloped nations struggling with security issues. They are also well aware of its importance to worldwide United States interests.<sup>73</sup> To some governments in the ACS program, that assistance is of the utmost importance--it may mean survival. For, in committing some of their meager military resources to making the ACS program work, these governments have made the program part of their security imperative. These governments are also, in effect, attempting to transform some of their military



organizations into nationbuilders. If these military organizations succeed in the ACS endeavor, they will reinforce their role as institutions that are important to the development of their countries. If they fail, their governments' dependence on other nations for their political and economic well-being and, ultimately, their security, will continue for years to come.

With one relatively inexpensive security assistance program, the United States is on the way to dramatically improving diplomatic relations with over a half dozen countries in a region of Africa where the United States has traditionally limited its security assistance role. Moreover, the United States is improving the quality of some of the military organizations in the region. This is an endeavor which can only be of long-term benefit to United States security interests in this area of the world.

With a little more money, some creativity coupled with solid planning, and continued responsible execution, the United States can also enhance the capabilities of several air units in the region. By using the US Air Force to develop that capability, the United States will transform more of the region's military organizations into nationbuilders. In making this effort, United States policymakers also will provide the Air Force with a foundation for similar endeavors elsewhere on the continent, and, perhaps, for other underdeveloped regions of the world.

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